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PASTOR'S AGE, COUCH GROWTH & VITALITY: WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP

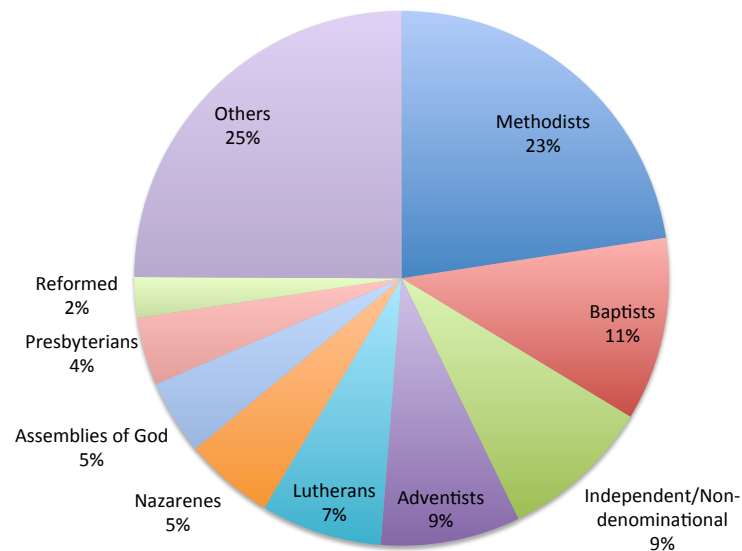
May 17, 2019
AHSRA Conference
Oakwood University

NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT DATA

NCDAMERICA.ORG

- 2008-2017 data
- 9,529 local congregations
- 258,099 surveys

Church Streams



NCD

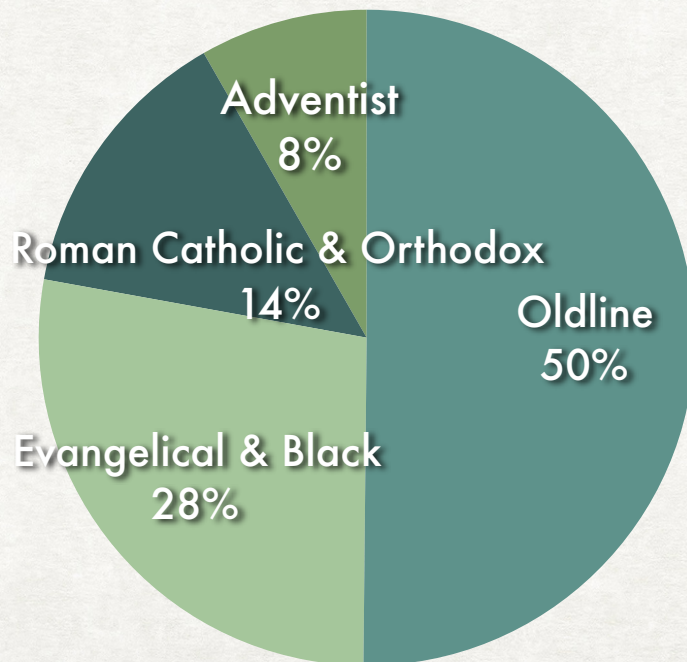
AMERICA

We Help You Thrive!

FAITH COMMUNITIES TODAY DATA

FAITHCOMMUNITIESTODAY.ORG

- 2015 data
- 3,847 local congregations
- 3,847 surveys



FAITH
Communities
TODAY

AGING PASTOR ?

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

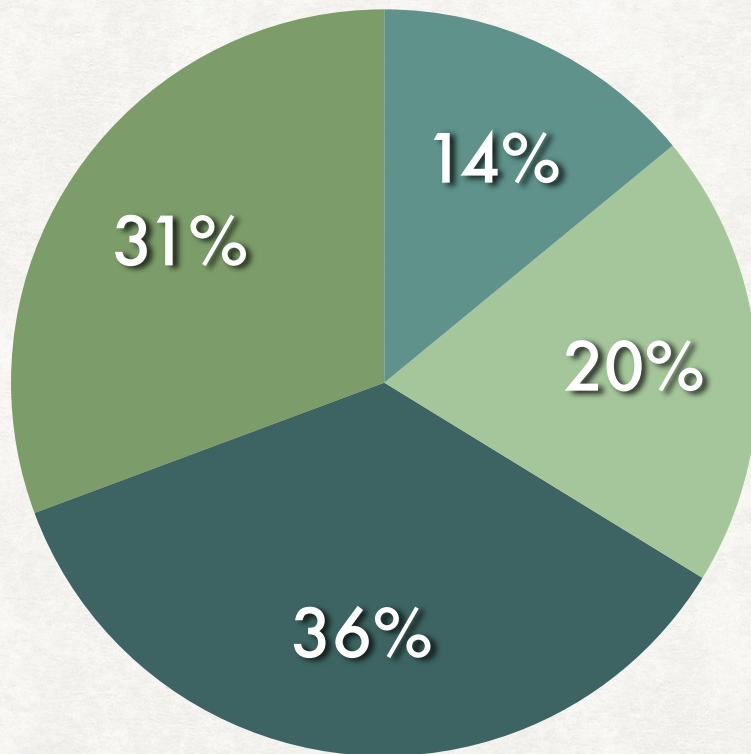
- How are selected measures of a church's wellbeing related to the pastor's age?
 - Church size, age of churches
 - Church growth trajectories?
 - Measures of congregational health?
 - Age of the members and groups in churches?
 - Leadership style of the pastor?

PASTOR'S AGE CATEGORIES

FACT 2015 AND NCD 2008-2017

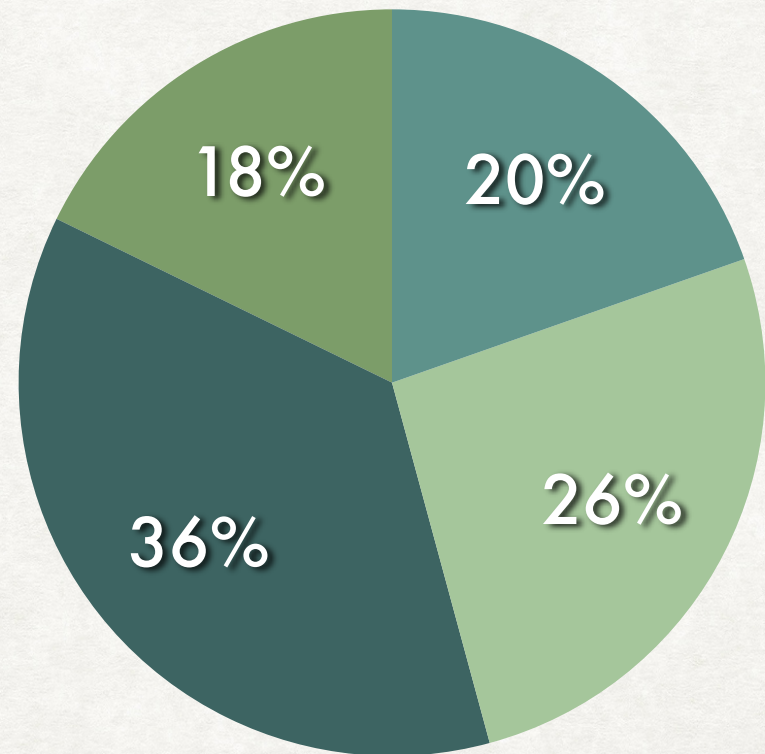
FACT 2015

N = 3374



NCD 2008-2017

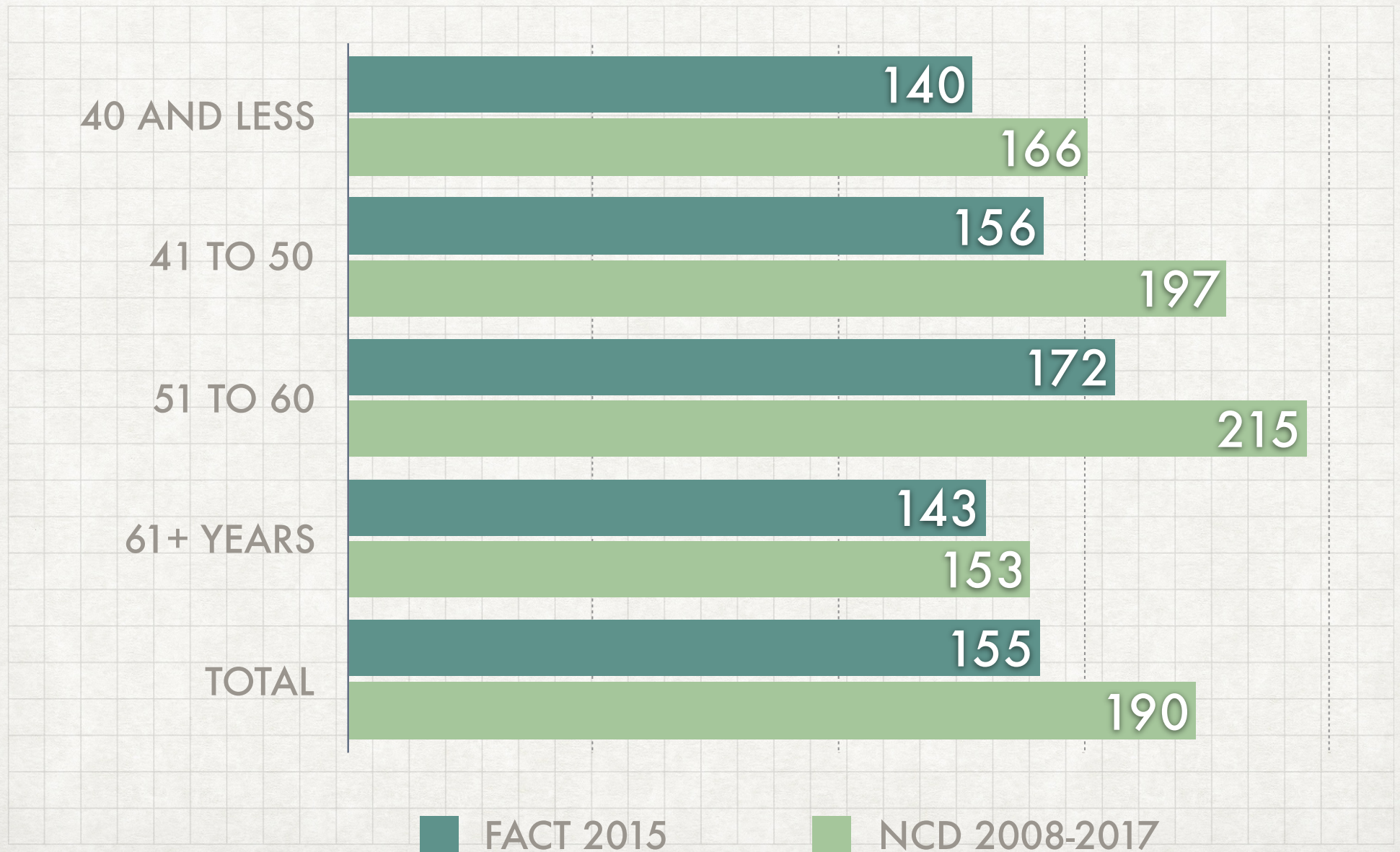
N = 8824



● 40 AND LESS ● 41 TO 50 ● 51 TO 60 ● 61+ YEARS

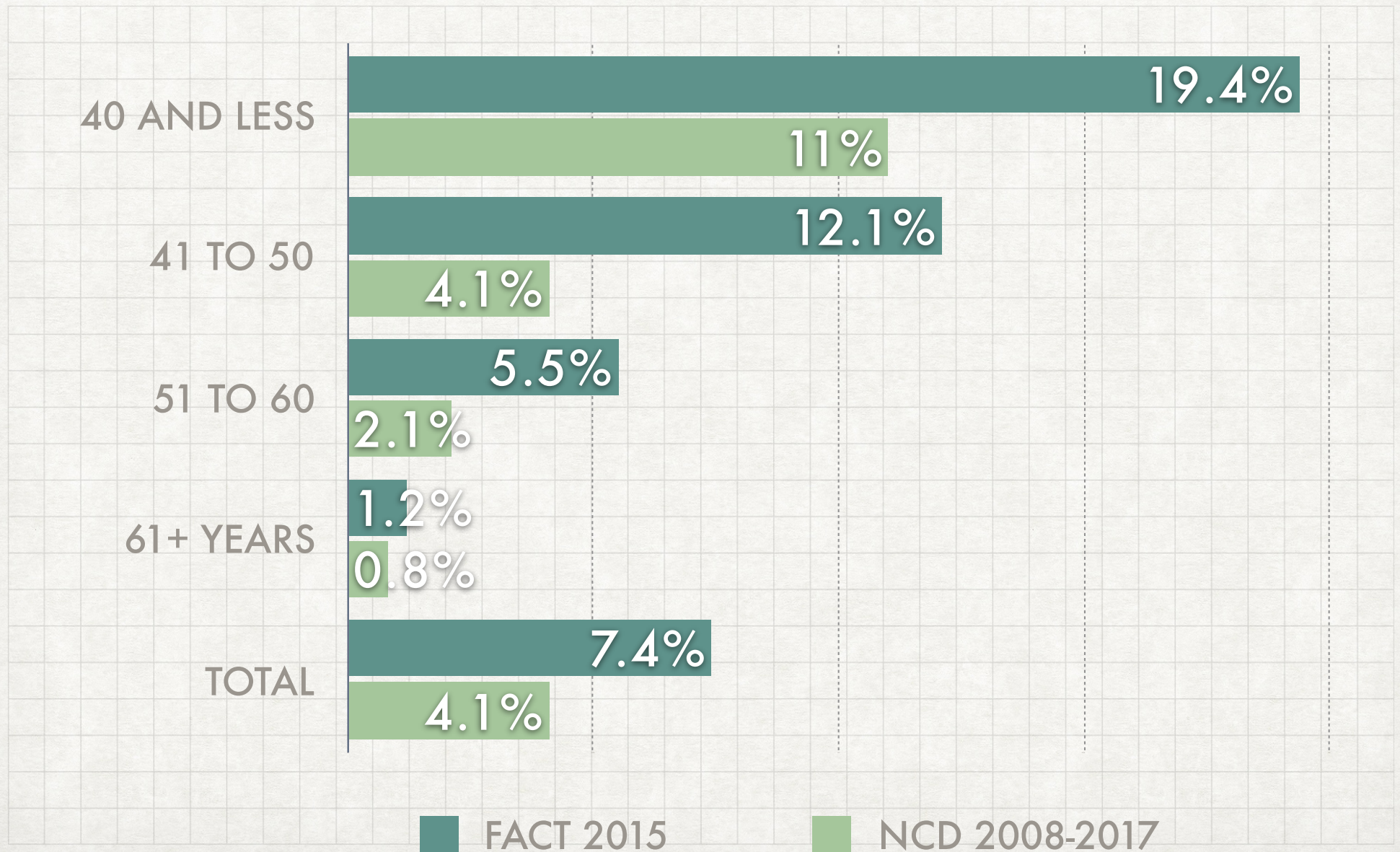
AVERAGE ADULT ATTENDANCE

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR



5 YEARS GROWTH RATE

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR



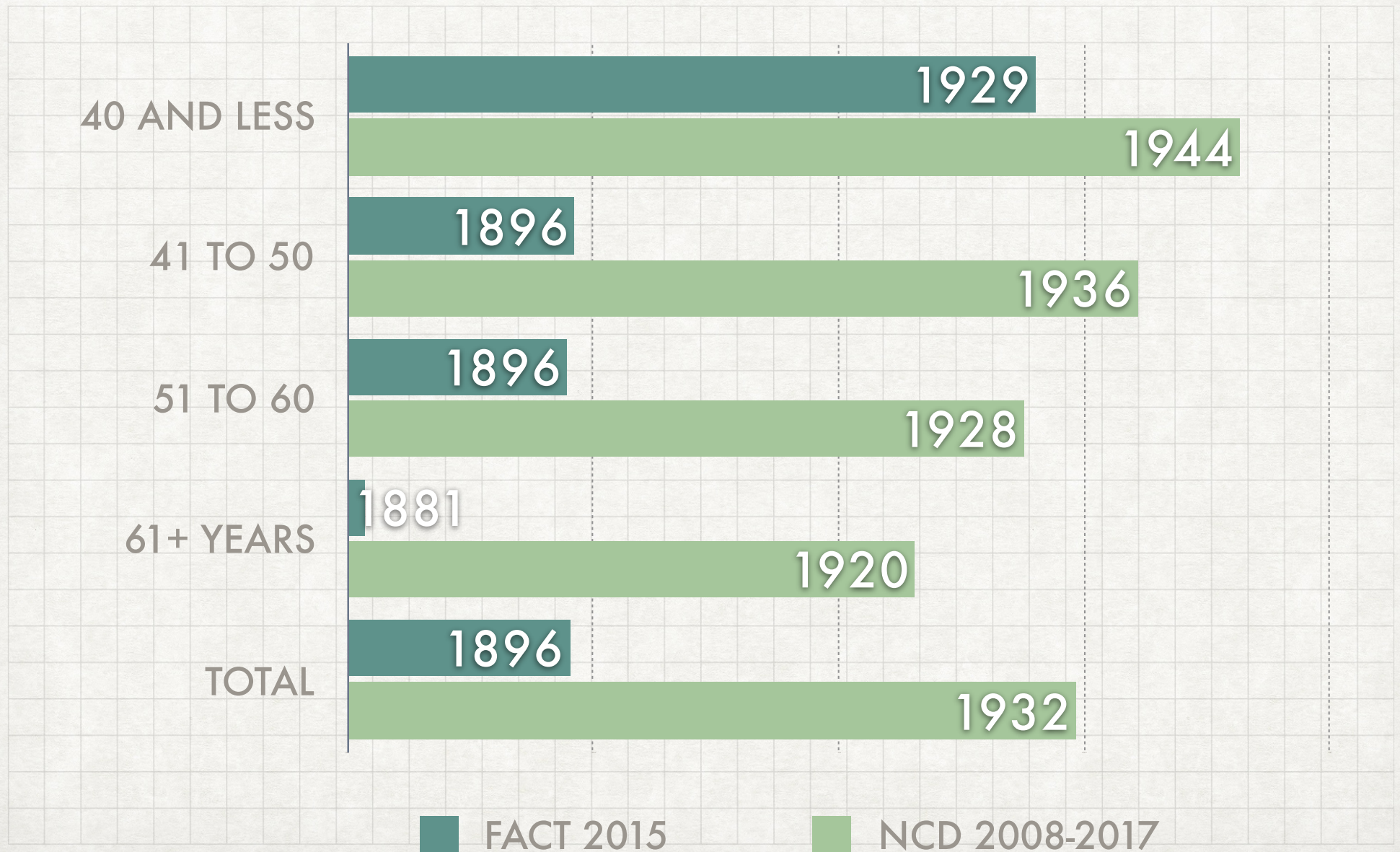
5 YEARS GROWTH RATE

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR

- Age of pastor and 5 Years Growth Rate
 - FACT 2015
 - $r = -.095, p = .000, N = 2430$
 - NCD 2008-2017
 - $r = -.076, p = .000, N = 8079$
- Age of pastor and 5 Years Average Annual Growth Rate
 - NCD 2008-2017
 - $r = -.154, p = .000, N = 7077$

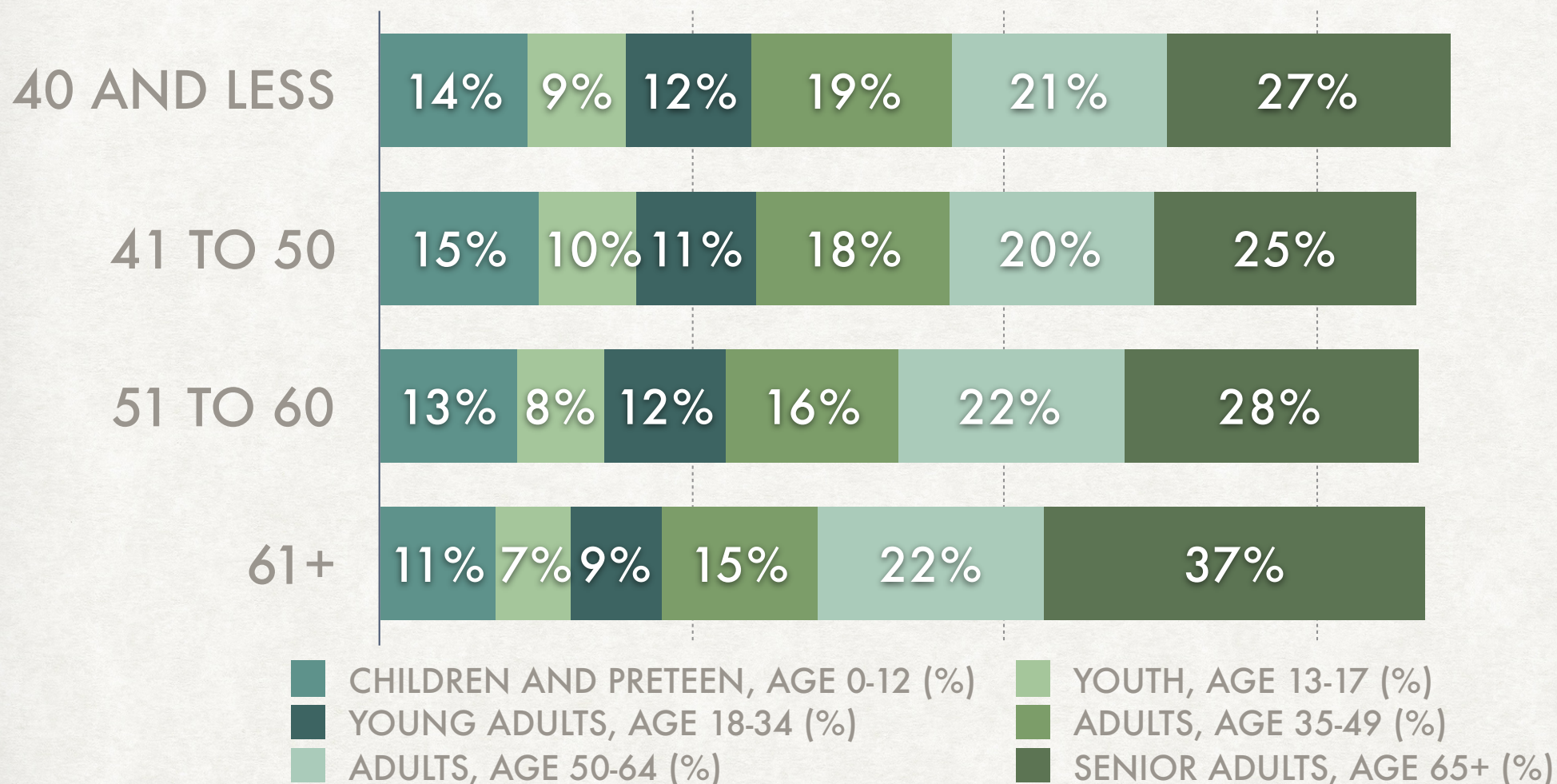
YEAR OF FOUNDING THE CHURCH

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR



DISTRIBUTION OF AGE GROUPS IN CHURCH

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR
FACT 2015



RATE OF PRESENCE OF AGE GROUPS

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR
NCD 2008-2017

Pastor's Age	Children	Youth	Young Adults	Young Fam.	Middle Age	Senior citizens
40 and less	52.5%	28.0%	21.3%	52.3%	79.6%	50.8%
41 to 50	52.3%	39.0%	19.6%	48.7%	85.0%	54.7%
51 to 60	48.0%	34.0%	18.5%	43.7%	87.8%	62.2%
61+	39.8%	28.4%	15.4%	35.9%	85.2%	72.7%
Total	48.6%	33.1%	18.8%	45.3%	85.0%	59.8%

AGE GROUPS OF SELECTED PARTICIPANTS IN THE SURVEY

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR
NCD 2008-2017

Pastor's Age	40 and less	41 to 50	51 to 60	61+
40 and less	37.7%	17.5%	19.4%	25.3%
41 to 50	28.4%	23.1%	21.0%	27.5%
51 to 60	23.0%	18.1%	26.0%	32.8%
61+	18.7%	15.3%	22.3%	43.9%
Total	26.5%	18.8%	22.8%	32.0%

CORRELATION OF AGE GROUPS IN THE CHURCH AND THE AGE OF THE PASTOR

SENIOR ADULTS 65+

R = .179, P = .000, N = 3011

ADULTS AGE 50-64

R = .050, P = .006, N = 3014

ADULTS AGE 35-49

R = -.140, P = .000, N = 3007

YOUNG ADULTS 18-34

R = -.088, P = .000, N = 2982

YOUTH AGE

13-17 R = -.127, P = .000, N = 2976

CHILDREN 0-12

R = -.153, P = .000, N = 2992

YOUNG ADULTS, PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDING WORSHIP

R = -.136, P = .000, N = 2504

YOUNG ADULTS, PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATING IN

OTHER PROGRAMS R = -.183, P = .000, N = 2374

AGE OF SELECTED PARTICIPANTS IN THE SURVEY AND

PASTORS AGE R = .156, P = .000, N = 248030

FACT 2015

NCD 2008-2017

0.179

0.05

-0.14

-0.088

-0.127

-0.153

-0.136

-0.183

0.156

OUR CHURCH IS SPIRITUALLY VITAL AND ALIVE

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR
FACT 2015

Pastor's Age	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral / Unsure	Agree/Strongly Agree
40 and less	7.1%	18.7%	74.3%
41 to 50	5.3%	11.5%	83.2%
51 to 60	5.6%	12.3%	82.1%
61+	5.7%	14.4%	79.8%
Total	5.8%	13.7%	80.6%
	$\chi^2 = 28.176, p = .005, N = 3326$		

THE RATE OF HEALTHY/UNHEALTHY CHURCHES

BY THE AGE OF PASTOR
NCD 2008-2017

Pastor's Age	Unhealthy (NCD score below 35)	(NCD score between 35 and 65)	Healthy (NCD score above 65)
40 and less	6.9%	68.4%	24.8%
41 to 50	5.5%	72.1%	22.4%
51 to 60	6.3%	75.4%	18.3%
61+	10.0%	76.0%	14.0%
Total	6.9%	73.2%	19.9%
	$\chi^2 = 98.861, p = .000, N = 8824$		

AGING PASTOR

CONCLUSION

- Younger pastors appear to be driving the largest share of church growth in the US. Pastors who are under 50 account for more than one-third of the growth in the FACT sample.
- Aging pastors head congregations with predominantly older congregants.
- When pastors rely on congregants, for example to respond to surveys, younger pastors reach out to younger respondents while aging pastors request older adults to respond.
- The churches where younger pastors lead, are rated as healthier than churches lead by older pastors.
- The leadership styles of younger pastors are more oriented towards goals whereas older pastors tend to be more serving and people oriented